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Director of Central Intelligence

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY

Thursday, 11 July 1991



TCS 2860/91 COPY 604

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South Africa: Reactions to Lifting of US Sanctions

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SOUTH AFRICA: Verifying Nuclear Compliance

South Africa signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty on Monday [redacted]

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Comment: Pretoria now has 18 months to bring the NPT protocols into force, which require that all of its nuclear material be open to international inspection. South Africa operated a pilot uranium enrichment plant for the production of highly enriched, weapons grade uranium (HEU) from the late 1970s until the plant was shut down in February 1990.

[redacted] Pretoria probably has not made a final decision as to whether to declare all or a part of its HEU. It probably will be disinclined to declare any HEU that has been converted into nuclear weapon components and could decide to maintain a stockpile of such components in South Africa [redacted]

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[redacted] Despite the positive reception Pretoria's announcement has received from the IAEA and from NPT signatories, the accession could eventually undercut the credibility of the treaty if it is discovered that South Africa retained a nuclear weapon capability.

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